

TITLE OF THE INVENTION

BABY BOTTLE HOLDER

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

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1. Field of Invention

[0001] The present invention relates generally to the field of infant care and more particularly to devices that provide for the “hands free” feeding of babies.

2. Background Information

[0002] In the past, various devices and methods have been used and proposed to assist in the feeding of babies. However, these devices and methods have significant limitations and shortcomings. Prior art structures are generally complex, cumbersome to use, or expensive. Moreover, none disclose a portable device for hands-free bottle feeding of an infant. The busy lifestyle of the modern parents which include commuting and transporting the family has increased the necessity for a device which will permit the baby to feed himself while the caregiver is otherwise engaged. For example, while driving the family car, the baby often drops the bottle and begins crying when he can not feed himself. The care giver cannot look for the dropped bottle while driving. Therefore, a need exists for a hands-free device which is attached to the baby and secures the baby bottle in a position which will enable the flow of the milk or other liquid.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0003] A baby bottle holder secures the bottle in a convenient hands-free position and holds the bottle an angle which allows a baby to receive liquid. The baby bottle holder is removably attached to a bib or other suitable article of clothing worn by the baby. The bottle is removably engaged by the baby bottle holder. At least one strap may be employed to fasten the bottle to the baby bottle holder.

[0004] In the preferred embodiment, the baby bottle holder of the present invention includes a support made of compliant but firm material, such a foam. The support holds the bottle and at least one strap and an attachment which affixes the holder to the baby's clothing, such as a bib. The foam support is a block-shaped with a concavity, which may advantageously be a semicircular, with a diameter selected to snugly grip the bottle. The concavity is placed at a height selected so that when the bottle is received by the support, the bottle can be placed at an angle using gravitational force to cause the milk to flow into the baby's mouth or tilted backward so that the liquid is not flowing. When the bottle is placed at the correct angle, the straps are used to secure the bottle in that position.

[0005] In another embodiment, the holder may also be a frame which includes a top surface, a bottom surface, a long axis, a first end and a second end.

[0006] The neck support includes a front face, a top end and a bottom end. The bottom end may be attached to the top surface substantially adjacent to the first end of the frame. The top end includes a neck receiver. The neck receiver may be sized and shaped to cradle the neck of a baby bottle. The neck of a baby bottle is located between the cap and the shoulder of the bottle. The neck receiver may be V-shape, U-shape, rectilinear, an open top oval, an open top circle, an open top heart shape or any other suitable shape. The neck support may be orientated relative to the frame so the long axis of a cradled baby bottle is substantially parallel to the long axis of the frame.

[0007] Each stop includes a bottom face and a front face. The bottom face of a first stop may be attached to the top surface substantially adjacent to the second end of the frame. The front face of the first stop is substantially parallel to the front face of the neck support. The baby bottle is placed in the neck of the baby bottle holder and the bottom is placed against the stop. The combination of the neck support and the stop prevents the baby bottle from moving substantially parallel to the long axis of the frame. At least one other stop may be located between the first stop and the neck support and orientated substantially parallel to the

first stop. Various stop locations correspond to the differing length baby bottles with the stop for shorter bottles located closer to the neck support while the stop for taller bottles is located closer to the second end of the frame. Each stop may be shaped as a rectangle, a half circle, a triangle or any other suitable shape. Each stop may also have a raised surface on the front face that helps it to engage a curved or concave shaped bottle bottom.

[0008] At least one strap may be used to retain a cradled baby bottle with its bottom abutting the stop to the baby bottle holder. Each strap has a first end and a second end. The first end of each strap may be attached to the first edge of the frame or to the neck support in any suitable location. The second end of each strap is attached to the second edge of the frame by a fastening mechanism to hold the baby bottle to the frame when the neck of the bottle is removably engaged with the neck support and the bottom butts up against the stop. The second end of each strap may be attached by hook and loop (“Velcro®”) material or any other suitable fastening mechanism.

[0009] An attachment mechanism may be attached to the bottom surface of the frame. The attachment mechanism may be hook and loop material or any other suitable material. The attachment mechanism holds the baby bottle holder to any suitable surface such as a bib, shirt, blouse or dress.

[0010] When in use, the support is removably attached to the baby’s bib by hook and loop material (“Velcro®”) with the neck support located closer to the baby’s mouth while the stop is further away. The neck of a baby bottle is installed into the neck support while the bottle bottom is brought to abut the stop. The second end of each strap is connected to retain the bottle to the support. The nipple of the bottle is guided into the baby’s mouth. The baby bottle holder holds the bottle in feeding position while the baby receives liquid.

[0011] In another embodiment of the present disclosure, the baby bottle holder includes two straps. The first end of a first strap is attached to the first edge of the frame. The first end of a second strap is attached to the second edge of the frame. The second end of the first strap is attached to the second end of the second strap to form a loop around a baby bottle removably engaged with the holder. The second end of the first strap may be attached to the second end of the second strap by hook and loop material or any other suitable fastening mechanism.

[0012] The height of the neck receiver may be adjustable.

[0013] The baby bottle holder may be attached to an article of child's clothing while removably engaging a baby bottle at an orientation suitable for hands-free drinking. The attachment mechanism may attach the holder to a bib, a shirt, a dress, a blouse or other suitable surface.

[0014] The holder removably engages the baby bottle. The holder may be block-shaped with a concavity, which may advantageously be a semicircular, with a diameter selected to snugly grip the bottle. The concavity is placed at a height selected so that when the bottle is received by the support, the bottle can be placed at an angle using gravitational force to cause the milk to flow into the baby's mouth. When the bottle is placed at the correct angle, the straps are used to secure the bottle in that position.

[0015] The holder may be rectilinear, but other suitable shapes may be used. The cross sectional shape of the concavity may be V-shape, U-shape, rectilinear, an open top oval, an open top circle, an open top heart shape or any other suitable shape. The support includes a first surface, a second surface, an upper surface and a bottom surface. The holder may be fabricated from closed-celled foam, rubber or any suitable material. The upper surface includes a concavity extending from the front surface to the back surface. The concavity may be substantially parallel to the first surface and the second surface. The concavity removably engages a portion of the outer surface of a baby bottle. The removably engaged bottle may be held by the holder such that it does not shift or slip relative to the holder. The concavity substantially envelops a portion of the outer surface of the baby bottle. An attachment mechanism is located on the bottom surface.

[0016] In another embodiment of the present disclosure, the baby bottle holder also includes at least one strap. The strap includes a first end and a second end. The first end may be attached to the first side or the second side or any other suitable location on the holder. The second end includes a fastening mechanism. The fastening mechanism may attach the second end to another strap or to any suitable location on the holder. When fastened across a bottle removably engaged by the concavity, the strap restrains the bottle to the holder.

[0017] The concavity may be inclined relative to the bottom surface. The inclination of the cavity may increase efficiency and comfort of the child during drinking.

[0018] In another embodiment of the present disclosure, the attachment mechanism may be hook and loop or other suitable attachment mechanism.

[0019] These and other features and advantages of this invention will become further apparent from the detailed description and accompanying figures that follow. In the figures and description, numerals indicate the various features of the invention, like numerals referring to like features throughout both the drawings and the description.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Figure 1A is a top view of one embodiment of the baby bottle holder installed on a bib according to the present disclosure.

Figure 1B is a top view of the baby bottle holder of figure 1A.

Figure 1C is a side view of the baby bottle holder of figure 1A.

Figure 2A is a top view of a baby bottle holder installed on a bib of the preferred embodiment according to the present disclosure.

Figure 2B is a front view of the baby bottle holder of figure 2A.

Figure 2C is a side view of the baby bottle holder of figure 2A.

Figure 2D is a front view of an of the preferred embodiment of the holder of figure 2A.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0020] Referring to figures 1A, 1B and 1C, a baby bottle holder 10 secures the baby bottle 12. The baby bottle holder 10 is removably attached to a bib 16. The baby bottle 12 is removably engaged by the baby bottle holder 10. Baby bottle holder 10 includes frame 66, neck support 14, stops 34 and 38, first strap 42, second strap 54 and attachment mechanism 94.

[0021] Frame 66 includes long axis 72, top surface 70, bottom surface 74, first end 78, second end 82, first edge 86 and second edge 90.

[0022] Neck support 14 includes front face 19, top end 18 and bottom end 21. Bottom end 21 may be attached to top surface 70 substantially adjacent to first end 78. Top end 18 includes neck receiver 26. Neck receiver 26 has a V-shape 30. Neck receiver 26 may be sized and shaped to cradle neck 25 of baby bottle 12. Neck 25 is located between cap 27 and shoulder 29 of baby bottle 12. Neck support 14 may be orientated so that long axis 72 is substantially perpendicular to front face 19.

[0023] First strap 42 may be employed to fasten baby bottle 12 to baby bottle holder 10. First strap 42 includes a first end 46 and a second end 50. First end 46 may be attached to frame 66. Fastening mechanism 41 may be attached to second end 50. Second strap 42 may be employed to fasten baby bottle 12 to baby bottle holder 10. Second strap 54 includes a first end 58 and a second end 62. First end 58 may be attached to frame 66. Fastening mechanism 43 may be attached to second end 62.

[0024] Stop 34 and 38 includes respective bottom ends 35 and 39 and front face 36 and 40. Bottom end 39 may be attached to top surface 70 substantially adjacent to second end 82. Front faces 36 and 40 are substantially parallel to front face 19. Baby bottle 12 may be orientated relative to baby bottle holder 10 so that bottom 20 butts up against front face 36. The combination of neck support 14 and stop 34 prevents baby bottle 12 from moving substantially parallel to long axis 72. Stop 34 may be located between stop 38 and neck support 14 and orientated substantially parallel to stop 38. Each stop 34 and 38 may be shaped as a rectangle, a half circle, a triangle or any other suitable shape. Each stop 34, 38 may also have a raised surface on front face 36, 40 that helps it to engage a curved or concave shaped bottom 20.

[0025] Attachment mechanism 94 for attaching the frame to the bib or other item of clothing may be affixed to bottom surface 74 of the frame. The attachment mechanism 94 may be hook and loop material or any other suitable means of attachment. The attachment mechanism 94 fastens baby bottle holder 10 to the support to bib 16.

[0026] When in use, neck 25 of a baby bottle 12 may be installed into neck receiver 26 while bottle bottom 20 butts against stop 34. A shorter baby bottle 12 may butt against stop 38. Fastening mechanism 41 and 43 may be attached to retain baby bottle 12 to baby bottle holder 10. Nipple 39 enters baby's mouth 37. Baby bottle holder 10 is removeably attached to the bib 16 by attachment mechanism 94. Baby bottle holder 10 holds baby bottle 12 while the baby receives liquid.

[0027] Referring to figures 2A, 2B, 2C and 2D, a preferred embodiment of baby bottle holder 110 secures the baby bottle 112. The baby bottle holder 110 is removably attached to a bib 116. The baby bottle 112 is removably engaged by the baby bottle holder 110. Baby bottle holder 110 includes grip 114, first strap 118, second strap 120 and attachment mechanism 122.

[0028] Grip 114 includes front surface 126, back surface 128, first surface 130, second surface 132, upper surface 134 and bottom surface 136. The upper surface 134 includes concavity 138. Concavity 138 extends from front surface 126 to back surface 128. Concavity 138 may be substantially parallel to first surface 126 or second surface 132. Concavity 138 includes surface 140 shaped to substantially envelop a portion of outer surface 142 of baby bottle 112. The cross-section of concavity 138 shown in figure 2B is an open top heart shape 141. The cross-section of concavity 138 shown in figure 2D is a U-shape 139. Concavity 138 may be inclined relative to bottom surface 136.

[0029] First strap 118 may be employed to fasten baby bottle 112 to baby bottle holder 110. First strap 118 includes a first end 144 and a second end 146. First end 144 may be attached to first surface 130. Fastening mechanism 148 may be attached to second end 146. Second strap 118 may be employed to fasten baby bottle 112 to baby bottle holder 110. Second strap 118 includes a first end 150 and a second end 152. First end 150 may be attached to second surface 132. Fastening mechanism 154 may be attached to second end 152.

[0030] Attachment mechanism 122 may be affixed to bottom surface 136. Attachment mechanism 122 may be hook and loop material 158 or any other suitable means of

attachment. The attachment mechanism 122 fastens baby bottle holder 110 to the support to bib 116.

[0031] When in use, baby bottle 112 may be removably engaged by surface 140. Baby bottle holder 110 may be orientated so that nipple 160 enters baby's mouth 162. Baby bottle holder 110 is removably attached to the bib 116 by attachment mechanism 122. Baby bottle holder 110 holds baby bottle 112 while the baby receives liquid.

[0032] Having now described the invention in accordance with the requirements of the patent statutes, those skilled in this art will understand how to make changes and modifications in the present invention to meet their specific requirements or conditions. Such changes and modifications may be made without departing from the scope and spirit of the invention as set forth in the following claims and their legal equivalents.